

WOL, MBS, In English to North America, October 17, 1949, 9:30 p.m. EST-W

(TEXT EXCERPTS) (Local broadcast SECRET MISSION, here giving verbatim quotations of Admiral Zacharias during this transmission)

This is Admiral Zacharias. The story you are about to hear is a SECRET MISSION exclusive. It is based upon a private investigation conducted to ascertain the facts, the true facts behind a welter of confused detail in the dramatic situation of current Russian-American relations. In tonight's drama, we do not have to substitute fictitious names for the real ones, or conceal the identity of our chief character to protect him. This man, whose strange adventure SECRET MISSION is about to dramatize is today beyond the scope of protection.

At the conclusion of the dramatic portion of our broadcast, I will reveal the lesson to our national security which this case teaches. But now let us listen to the Mission of the Prodigal Spy, which will be reported to you by a man I shall call Commander Mitchell.

(Program here introduced, recorded.)

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This is Commander Mitchell. You're an idea man for the Soviet Espionage Service. You're stationed in Moscow. Two questions keep you awake nights -where can I find an agent who's a good bet and how do I sneak him into America? Sometimes you get a lucky break. This way for instance. This is a barracks outside Moscow. The young man sitting by the shortwave radio is a Lieutenant of the Soviet Air Force, (Peter Pirgov-ph). This was his real name. Some very romantic and touching stories have been told about how all this began. But this is what actually happened. (Pirgov) was ^{sitting} ~~sitting~~ by the shortwave radio: (sound of door opening and closing)

Pirgov: Who is it?

(Anatol: Just Anatol.

Pirgov: Oh, yes. You're back early, Anatol.

Anatol: We did not have manoeuvres. And you, what did you do today?

Pirgov: I was tired; ~~and~~ I slept.

Anatol: And listened to the radio?

Pirgov: A little. (more)

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Anatol: I should think that would be interesting.

Pirgov: Why?

Anatol: Because you're listening to a forbidden wavelength, because you're

listening to the voice of America.

Pirgov: You will forget about that, eh, Anatol?

~~Pirgov:~~ a serious

Anatol: It is ~~the most serious~~ offense, ~~Pirgov:~~

Pirgov: I heard it by mistake. I was trying to find another station.

Anatol: I hardly think so. That ash tray full of cigarette stumps. Your brand.

You rarely smoke. Only when you are terribly excited. You have this

afternoon smoked countless cigarettes.

Pirgov: Anatol, we have been close comrades. Do not report me to the NKVD.

Anatol: Failure to report this to the secret police is just as much a crime as

listening to the Voice of America itself.

Pirgov: Just you and I know of it. Couldn't it be easily forgotten?

Mitchell: No, Anatol couldn't forget anything concerning the secret police.

As he revealed to friends later- this is the first time it's ~~been~~ been made public-

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Anatol Barsov had a childhood experience that seared into his brain, branded it with the letters NKVD. One of his primary school teachers had been arrested by the Soviet police and had never been seen again. Ever since then, Anatol played it very safe. [So you're an idea man for the Soviet Espionage Service and you're sitting at your desk at headquarters, and this Barsov comes along.

He ~~and~~ tells you a story. You size him up as he stands there nervous, perspiring, selling out his friend, prattling on like a mechanical parrot.

Piotr

Anatol: ~~Piotr~~ was listening to the Voice of America. I heard it outside the

door of the barracks. I think he wants to go to America. I'm reporting

this, ~~Comrade~~ Comrade, because it is my duty. I am innocent, but my

Piotr

friend ~~Piotr~~ is

Agent: Yes, yes, Barsov. It is quite clear.

Anatol: You, you will arrest him.

Agent: No

Anatol: I do not understand.

Agent: My dear Barsov, our prisons are filled to bursting. Of what possible

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use would it be to arrest yet another idiot?

Anatol: Then the episode is ended?

Agent: Quite the contrary, now the episode begins.

Anatol: What do you mean?

Agent: Look. I will draw a picture. This is a fortress. You are obliged to enter
but
this fortress secretly, not just once/many times. Therefore, you will resort
to devices, but eventually, Barsov, the mathematics of the problem will
defeat you. You will run out of ideas. True?

Anatol: Yes.

Agent: Now, imagine the United States as this fortress. We are obliged to get
secret agents in. The possibilities are not endless. We must eventually
exhaust our methods. I was in such a dilemma when you came here. Now
I have an idea.

Anatol: I am to enter the United States as a secret agent.

Agent: Yes, but to you there will be nothing secret about it all. You and your

Piotr
friend ~~Piotr~~ Pingov will enter the United States to the music of

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a welcoming band, to speeches of a welcoming committee. A new way to enter the fortress, heh, heh Barsov.

(music)

Mitchell: Fully briefed on his mission, Anatol Barsov returned to the Air Force barracks and to Peter Pirgov. As the Espionage officer had observed now the little episode would really get rolling. This was step one.

Pirgov: Well, Anatol, you have been out late. You reported me, heh?

Piotr.

Anatol: No, ~~Piotr~~. I was just walking, and thinking.

Pirgov: And what have you decided?

Anatol: Close the window and lock the door.

Pirgov: What!

Anatol: Do as I say quickly and quietly.

Pirgov: Very well.

(closing of window and door)

Anatol: I've had to fight a great ~~struggle~~ struggle within myself. You see I ~~do~~

could not turn you over to the police for listening to the Voice of

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America, because I've wanted myself to hear it.

Pirgov: You have what?

Anatol: Yes. I have been hoping to hear it. I have read a lot about America. To me the United States is a wonderful dream.

Pirgov: Why haven't you told me?

Anatol: For the same reason you have been listening to the broadcasts secretly.

Piotr,
Dear ~~Piotr~~ we should talk about America. We should not only talk

Piotr.
~~Piotr~~. I have a plan.

(music)

(sound of airplane motors)

Mitchell: Official records show the date. It was October 8, 1948. The two Soviet fliers were over Russian territory, but bound for Austria. This was step two.

(sound of airplane motors)

Anatol: Any planes behind us yet?

Pirgov: No.

Anatol: They did not suspect anything when we took off. I simply said Navigator

Pirgov (more)

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and Pilot Barsov request permission to use the plane and practice

~~xxx~~ **Piotr,** manoeuvres. Now, ~~Piotr~~, remember our ~~xxxxx~~ agreement. We wait until there ~~there~~ are two minutes of flying time left in the gas ~~xxx~~ tank. Then

we crash land. It is two minutes and 30 seconds now.

Pirgov: They must know in Moscow. We have been gone too long.

Anatol: Remember the rest of our agreement. If we land~~x~~ and are captured by the Soviets, you will shoot me and kill yourself.

Pirgov: You are being morbid. You are still frightened.

Anatol: In 20 seconds, we dive. Where are we as closely as you can see?

~~Pirgov: Where are we?~~

Pirgov: Austria, near the border, but I cannot be certain if we will land in Soviet or American territory. I could not get a detailed map of this area.

Anatol: 15 seconds. ... is ready.

Pirgov: Ready.

Anatol: You know what to do if this is Russian land.

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Pirgov: Yes.

Anatol: Five seconds, four, three, two, one. We dive!

(sound of diving plane. Music)

Anatol: Are you all right, ~~Piotr~~ Piotr?

Pirgov: Yes, help me out of the plane. ~~Yes~~

Anatol: I see men coming, running toward us.

Pirgov: Can you make out who they are?

Anatol: No. A car too heading this way.

(sound of car motor)

Anatol: I am Lieutenant Anatol Barsov. This is ~~Piotr~~ ^{Piotr} Pirgov of the Soviet

Air Force. We have lost the way. Where are we? Get your revolver

^{Piotr.}
ready, ~~Piotr~~. Ready to fire?

Pirgov: Ready, Anatol.

Anatol: I said-Where are we?

American: Austria, city of Linz, Camp (McCauley-ph), American Zone.

(music)

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Mitchell: The act went over beautifully. The idea of two young Russians so ~~xxx~~ in love with the States that they ~~xxx~~ skipped out from behind the Iron Curtain caught America's fancy. You saw their pictures. Remember? And the newspapers:

Reporter: Will you look this way please, Mr. Barsov. You too Mr. Pirgov-
admiring the American skyscrapers. That's it! Hold it!

(music)

Mitchell: The act in theatrical parlance was a "smash". They posed for
newsreel. ~~x~~

Camermaman: O.K. Mr. Barsov, when I wave that means we're rolling. You smile
~~xxx~~ ~~x~~ and say what you told me before. Ready. Roll 'em.

Barsov: We are so happy to be here in America. We have heard about Virginia ^{on} ~~xxx~~
the Voice of America. That is where we want to go.

(music)

~~Mitchell~~

Southern spokesman: The Virginia Chamber of Commerce ~~xx~~ is happy to welcome you

to our glorious state known throughout the civilized world as the

birthplace of presidents. (more)

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(music)

Mitchell: The Espionage Director in Moscow had said:

Agent: You will be a brand new type of secret agent. There will be nothing secret about you at all. You and your friend will be greeted by a welcoming band, by the applause and cheers of the crowd.

(music)

Mitchell: They were entertained royally. The red carpet was out. The gleaming silver ice buckets were filled with vintage champagne.

(music)

Mitchell: Oh yes, they were questioned by United States Counter-Intelligence.

(music)

Speaker: They were questioned by United States Counter-Intelligence, Comrade.

Agent: Excellent. Every moment Barsov and Pirgov spend in America is of priceless value to us here at the NKVD.

Speaker: You mean they are learning American Counter-Intelligence techniques.

Agent: Of course, and other things too. Barsov is being run through their

entire Counter-Intelligence mechanism, their procedure, their questions. He

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will learn all of these. They are even discussing American planes and
... tactics while he's present.

Speaker: Very worth while trip, eh?

Agent: Very. He is mingling with anti-Soviet groups, learning who run^s them. He

may have learned a great deal while he was in Germany too, possibly
about how the underground there is helping persons who ~~suffering~~^{escape} from the
Soviet Zone.

Speaker: But, perhaps neither of them will^{ever} come back. The project would be a complete
failure.

Agent: They will come back.

When?
Speaker: How?

Agent: You will see. That is Act III of the little melodrama I have created, and
Barsov knows his role very well.

(music)

Pirgov: You seem unhappy, Barsov. You should be delighted. You are in America.

Anatol: Yes. Land of

(more)

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Pirgov: What?

Anatol: The party is over. Now we are learning the truth.

Pirgov: What truth?

Anatol: The celebrations, the receptions, camouflage. Now we must (peep) ourselves
into the ruthless... of American capitalism.

Pirgov: But I am working on a book. You say you have a job. What is wrong?

Anatol: My job is pressing women's dresses in a sweat shop. They're exploiting me.

Pirgov: Ridiculous. You sound like the newspapers we read in Moscow. What has
come over you?

Anatol: Nothing. I have simply realized it was an illusion. Life in the Soviet
Union is far better than it is here in America.

Pirgov: Oh, you're just (crazy). You have a bit too much to drink.

Anatol: Oh, no, I realize exactly what ~~it~~ I'm saying. ~~It~~ I ~~it~~ want to go home.

Pirgov: Go ~~to~~ home? Are you insane? They will kill you.

Anatol: Perhaps.

Pirgov: You are out of your mind. I am very content here. You should be too.

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Anatol: You have fallen victim to their tricks. I have not.

Pirgov: Perhaps if you found another job.

Anatol: I have been offered another job- a construction project Connecticut.

Do you think I would be satisfied there- struggling along with hundreds
of others

Pirgov: It is suicide for you to return to the Soviet. How can you do it?

Anatol: I am going to the Soviet Embassy.

(music)

Embassy employee: Here ~~and~~^{at} the Embassy we are very pleased that you have had a
change of heart, Comrade Barsov.

Anatol: ~~MayxIx~~ And I may go back?

Embassy employee: Not just yet.

Anatol: What must I do?

Embassy employee: You see, Comrade. Your return will convince many persons of the
differences between life in Russia and life here. There is just ~~x~~ one thing
missing from this pretty picture.

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Anatol: What is it.

Embassy employee: Pirgov.

Anatol: Pirgov?

Embassy employee: I have received my instructions from Moscow. If you would be well received, get Pirigov to go back with you.

Anatol: I do not believe I can do that.

Embassy employee: I would try if I were you.

Anatol: What if I fail?

Embassy employee: Oh, if you fail, you will return, report to the NKVD and then you will be sentenced to hard labor.

Anatol: I will what? It is absurd! I have served the Soviet. ~~nothing~~ I've made sacrifices, taken a great risk.

Embassy employee: Those were the instructions.

Anatol: I will not stand for it.

Embassy employee: What could you do about it?

Anatol: I won't— I will—

Embassy employee: Get Pirigov to go back or you might even hang. Those were (more)

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the instructions.

(music)

Pirgov: Absolutely not, Anatol. I have no intention of leaving the United States.

Anatol: But you must.

Pirgov: Who is there to make me?

Anatol: You're a traitor to the Soviet. You have sold ~~xxx~~ out to the capitalist system.

Pirgov: You do not have to rattle off the old cliches, Anatol. I know that speech better than you do.

Anatol: You are going back with me.

Pirgov: Let go of my throat. You are crazy. We would both be killed.

(sound of struggle)

Piotr.

Anatol: I am sorry, ~~Piotr~~. I do not know what I am doing. They have confused me.

You see when I was a boy in school, police came for my teacher. Ever since then I have been afraid of them. I'm like a puppet in their hands. They told

me.--- (more)

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Pirgov: What did they tell you?

Anatol: Nothing. I'm leaving.

Pirgov: ~~Where, where~~
Where, where are you going?

Anatol: Back to them.

Pirgov: They will kill you. You must not do ~~what~~ as they say.

Anatol: Yes, yes I must. All of my life- whatever they say.

Pirgov: Haven't you the strength, the pride, the intelligence to stand up to them.

Anatol: No, no I never did. I can't.

Pirgov: And all your life you have lived by a pattern.

Anatol: I will go back to them. Those were my instructions.

(music)

Mitchell: Anatol Barsov disappeared. Pirgov bided his time, but days passed,
a week, a month. Then Pirgov went to the United States Government.

(music)

American: You haven't seen your friend, Anatol for a month.

Pirgov: Yes, and I am seriously worried. What, what have they done with him.

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American: Hmm. They couldn't have sent him back to Russia. We'd know that, unless they sneaked him out. Well, ~~xx~~ that's pretty tough these days. We're on to those stunts. Now they want you to go back with him. I have an idea, Mr. Pirigov.

Pirigov: What is it?

American: Pick up this phone.

Pirigov: Whom shall I call?

American: The Soviet Embassy.

Pirigov: And ask for him?

American: Exactly. They just might throw out bait to catch you. If they do, you nibble.

Pirigov: Very well. (sound of dialing of phone)

Embassy: Soviet Embassy.

Pirigov: This is ^{Piotr} ~~Piotr~~ Pirigov.

Embassy: Ah, yes, yes. What can we do ~~x~~ for you?

Pirigov: I have been wondering if you had any word from Anatol Barsov.

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Embassy: Certainly. He is fine. He is here, you know, in the Embassy.

Pirgov: May I speak with him.

Embassy: One moment. Barsov.

Anatol: Yessir.

Embassy: Answer the telephone. It's ~~pirx~~ Pirgov. Make an appointment ~~with~~ with him. You will meet him - let me see- at the Trois Mousquetaires ~~Restaurant~~

Restaurant here in Washington tomorrow night.

Anatol: Trois Mousquetaires Restaurant tomorrow night.

Pirgov: Hello, Anatol. How are you?

Anatol: Very well.

Pirgov: Can I see you.

Anatol: Yes. Trois Mousquetaires Restaurant tomorrow night.

Pirgov: Good. I will be there. Goodbye.

Embassy: Now just one more thing. (sound of buzzer)

Clerk: Yes~~x~~ sir. You rang?

Embassy: Tell (Bachek) we have found some job ~~for him~~, (Niki) I want them to be (more

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a at the Trois Mousquetaires tomorrow night. Barsov will meet Pirigov there.

Tell Niki to persuade Pirigov to come back here to the Embassy. In fact, tell him to take his boys along in case Pirigov objects. They are very good at persuading people.

(music)

Mitchell: It was the evening of August 17, 1949. At the Washington restaurant Barsov and Pirigov were seated together at the table.

Pirigov: Where have you been all this time, Anatol?

Anatol: At the Embassy. They treated me very well.

Pirigov: Why were you held there for a month?

Anatol: They treated me very well.

Pirigov: Are you going back to the Soviet Union?

~~Anatol: Yes, yes~~

Niki- American voice: Yes and you're going back with him.

Pirigov: What! Who the devil are you?

Niki

American voice: Get up and leave the table, Pirigov, and walk to the front door.

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There's a car waiting outside. Go on. I'll walk behind you.

Pirgov: I will not.

Niki
American voice: Don't start anything. You'll get hurt. I've got a gun under
this top coat on my arm. I said get up and leave the table, Pirgov.

Pirgov: Anatol. You knew they would do this.

Anatol: We must do as they say..

Niki
American voice: Come on, come on, walk. That's it. My friend 's paid your check.

Out the front door. You open it.

(door opening and closing. sound of motor running.)

Niki
American voice: That's the car. ~~Box~~ Get in. Don't start anything I don't want
trouble.

U.S. Govt Agent: I don't think you'll have any trouble Niki.

Niki
American voice: What!

U.S. Govt Agent: I'm a U.S. Government agent. We want Mr. Barsov and Mr.

Pirgov. Barsov's passport has expired.

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Niki
American voice: Get out of the way or I'll blow your head off.

U.S. Govt Agent: With the gun under your top coat? I don't think so. We took
out the driver of your car, Niki. That's one of my men at the wheel.

He's covering you. We also took the trouble of blocking off the street
with radio cars. You wouldn't play against long odds like that, Niki.

You know better than that.

(music)

Mitchell: It would be pleasant to report that Anatol Barsov never returned to
Moscow with his valuable information about allied intelligence. Our intelligence
officers did everything possible to keep Barsov here in the States, but---
the ~~Statement~~ State Department said:

Department clerk: If ~~xxx~~ he wants to go back, we must observe his rights.

International law, you know. Send him back.

(music)

Mitchell: Just a few weeks ago at this same Austrian border where he had left,

Anatol Barsov was turned over to Soviet authorities. Pirgov refused to return.

As he was going back alone, it was a fairly good bet that Anatol Barsov some

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time later found himself in Russia on a prison train, bound for a labor camp, hunger, disease and slow death.

(sound of train) On a train racing across the grotesque wilderness in the twilight was a man who had won the inevitable ~~reward for~~ reward for service from totalitarianism, remembering the days of his childhood when he had learned to fear the secret police.

(sound of train. music)

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This is Admiral Zacharias again. Tonight's drama was given the title, "The Mission of the Prodigal Spy." We are fully satisfied that it was the true story of a 31-year-old ex-Lieutenant of the Soviet Air Force. Today he is only one of many among the living dead of Russia's innumerable forced labor camps. ^EWhat are the facts behind this unusual adventure? A few weeks ago, a strange episode in Russian-American relations made glaring headlines on the front page of your newspaper. The incident involved a Russian Air Force deserter---a short, husky, sandy-haired man, his face pitted with pockmarks. His name was Anatoly Barsov.

On October 9, 1948, with his navigator Barsov landed his plane at Linz, Austria, within the United States zone. He said he was a refugee from Communist oppression. He was granted asylum here in the United States, but last summer it became known that since July 28, 1949 Barsov was in contact with the Soviet Embassy in Washington. He was

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preparing to sneak out of this country undetected; he was preparing to return to Russia.

To the people of America his change of heart just didn't make sense. There was an explanation somewhere deep in the troubled soul of this confused Russian, but the long stories printed by the newspapers failed to provide this explanation. So SECRET MISSION decided to conduct a private investigation to discover the true facts behind this immensely important incident. Information was supplied by men and women who had known Lieutenant Barsov well, to whom he had opened his heart and revealed significant parts of his life story.

When our investigation was concluded, we were satisfied that here was indeed the story of a prodigal spy, caught in the deadly web of the Soviet Secret Police.

What is the lesson for us in the strange case of Lieutenant Barsov? Every day thousands of Barsovs cross the East-West frontier of Europe.

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They are deserters from the Soviet orbit and seek haven in the western world. The better their story, the warmer their reception. Some of these refugees are aware of this fact. They arrive with unusual tales, figments of their own imaginations carefully prepared for the reception committee. These men, instead of contributing to the defense of the West, actually undermine our security through misleading information. They dilute our intelligence with data that is useless and even dangerous.

Barsov was such a case. We should have been on guard against him. He was an insignificant lieutenant whose ignorance of conditions in Russia made him undeserving of the lavish attention we showered upon him. I hope we will benefit from this lesson. We must continue to give asylum to victims of Communist oppression, but we should distinguish between bona fide refugees and the prodigal spies who are crossing the line in ever-increasing numbers.

(further announcements about next week's program)

(END)